

10 June 1963


MEMORANDUM FOR: General Carter

1. The Director has asked me to give you my comments on his draft letter of 10 June to Secretary Gilpatric. This letter goes to the basic issue and if we are going to stay in the reconnaissance business I think the points are well taken.

2. It is the interjection of the JRC into NRO that thoroughly confuses the issue and gives me great doubts that anything so organized could operate without continual dispute and confusion. Further, I believe there would be great resistance to putting a CIA appointee as fulltime Deputy Director in the chain of command. I know of nothing in our experience in the conduct of our operations in the past which indicates any need for JRC participation, and in fact I believe the indications are to the contrary.

3. The question whether we stay in the business is a good one. We originally took the U-2 program, over strong protest of the Bureau of the Budget, upon acknowledgment by the Air Force that they could not do the procurement with adequate security and on the theory that we could make the flights plausibly deniable. The latter point proved of doubtful validity, and on procurement the Air Force has improved its procedures but could not, I believe, carry out a program like OXCART with the requisite security. Neither could they, in my opinion, negotiate as quickly and as securely with other countries on the delicate rights involved in staging overflights. These, I believe, are valid continuing points and possibly should be stressed in this letter.

4. Aside from this I concur in the substance of the letter. There is repetition in the last paragraph on page 2 and the last paragraph on page 4 in commenting on use of JRC to execute DCI missions, but perhaps this is good as emphasis.

  
L. R. Houston

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